

Message Text

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44

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

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SECSTATE WASHDC 8565

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1328

USIAC

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT FOR MRS. GALLAGHER AND MRS. DYKES

1. CHARGE D'AFFAIRES YESTERDAY REVIEWED CASE OF TWO KIDNAPPED USIA OFFICERS WITH DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF SURETE GENERALE AND TOOK OCCASION TO EMPHASIZE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR SAFETY AND WELFARE OF DIPLOMATS AND ASK THAT HIGHEST LEVELS OF LEBANESE GOVERNMENT MAKE COMMAND DECISION ON BEST MEANS TO OBTAIN TWO OFFICER' RELEASE. IN COURSE OF DISCUSSION, DIRECTOR-GENERAL EXPRESSED BELIEF THAT TWO OFFICERS WERE AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THEIR ABDUCTORS AND WOULD THUS BE RELEASED SOONER OR LATER.

2. SOURCE WE HAVE BEEN DESCRIBING AS "WELL-INFORMED" HAS AGAIN TOLD US THAT INTERNAL POLITICS OF PALESTINIAN MOVEMENT ARE MOVING IN DIRECTION FAVORABLE TO TWO OFFICER' RELEASE AND THAT SYRIAN INITIATIVE TO RAISE CASE IN HIGHER MILITARY COMMITTEE (POSTPONED TO TODAY BECAUSE HEAVY SNOWFALL BLOCKED SYRIAN DELEGATES ON ROAD BETWEEN DAMASCUS AND BEIRUT) IS IN FACT PART OF EFFORT TO BZWSTER POSITION OF THOSE WHO ARE WORKING TO SECURE OFFICERS' RELEASE. SAME SOURCE HAS AGIN ALSO CAUTIONED

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AGAINST PUBLICITY AT THIS TAGE.

3. IN ALL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIGH-LEVEL LEBANESE CONTACTS,
WE ARE CONTINUING TO EMPHASIZE THEME THAT CASE OF TWO
KIDNAPPED OFFICERS IS MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO RESTORATION
OF CONFIDENCE IN LEBANON BY FOREIGN BUSINESSES AND
DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS. WE HOPE THIS ARGUMENT IS SINKING
IN.

ROSS

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NNN

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